Indian delegation to South Asian countries

3151. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of official delegations which visited South Asian countries in the last financial year from India;

(b) whether there is a proposal to send some official delegations to Pakistan during the current year;

(c) if so, the details of such proposals;

(d) the criteria used to fix emphasis of certain subjects which the delegations would take up; and

(e) the steps proposed to raise issues pertaining to mutual violations of maritime boundaries with Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The following official delegations visited South Asian countries in the last financial year from India:

(i) External Affairs Minister, Shri K. Natwar Singh visited Nepal June 4-5,2004.

(ii) Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahammed visited Colombo August 26-27, 2004 to attend the 5th IOR-ARC Council of Ministers Meeting.

(iii) External Affairs Minister, Shri K. Natwar Singh paid an official visit to Bhutan October 12-13,2004.

(iv) MoS Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, visited Bhutan October 20—23, 2004.

(v) MdS Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, visited Nepal from November 29-30,2004.

(vi) External Affairs Minister, Shri K. Natwar Singh visited Pakistan February 15—17,2005.

(b) No Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise

(e) The India-Pakistan maritime boundary, which will extend from the mouth of the Sir Creek seawards into the Arabian Sea has not been delimited as yet The main hurdle in its delimitation is the continuing dispute over the demarcation of the Sir Creek boundary.